

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 5, 2007. Claims 31 to 45 remain in the application, of which Claims 31, 36 and 41 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 41 to 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The claims have been amended as suggested in the Office Action by inserting the term “computer readable” before “storage medium”. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 31 to 45 were rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over Claims 1 to 27 of U.S. Patent No. 6,665,446 issued on the parent of the present application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention is believed to be non-obviously different from that claimed in the '446 patent for at least the following reasons. In the present invention, a specific image area of the input image is extracted utilizing a two step process. First, the specific image is extracted by specifying an image area having color component values within a predetermined range, and then, second, a determination is made whether or not the specified image area has a predetermined shape. In contrast, in the claims of the '446 patent, the specific area is extracted by pattern matching between an area having a predetermined color component value range and a predetermined shape. The foregoing processes are believed to be non-obviously different from one another. Therefore,

reconsideration and withdrawal of the double patenting rejections are respectfully requested.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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